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ABSTRACT

Suggestions designed to help communities attain the fifth National Education Goal are offered in this document. The goal states that by the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Seven principles for consideration when developing a community strategy are discussed: changing attitudes; getting to know the community; reaching out; creating skill clinics; making adult education easy; motivating adult learning; and measuring the results. Eleven promising and successful programs are described and 15 various resource groups are listed. (Contains 11 references.) (LMI)

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AMERICA 2000

ISSUES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

What Other Communities Are Doing....

National Education Goal #5

By the year 2000:
Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Introduction

Sometimes referred to as the skill of skills, literacy means more than just reading, writing and communicating effectively. Literacy means having the knowledge and skills all of us need to be productive workers, good parents, and full participants as citizens of our communities and our country.

As many as 30 million American adults lack basic reading and math skills necessary to function effectively in our increasingly advanced economy. Too many Americans have such poor command of the English language that participation in society itself is a struggle. For them, exercising the rights and responsibilities of citizenship remains a distant dream. Many are immigrants, some of whom are also illiterate in their native language. Others include the learning disabled, displaced workers, and the homeless.

These 30 million adults are at great risk today. Yet they represent a mere fraction of those among us who, although equipped with skills adequate for today, are in danger of becoming strangers in the workplace of tomorrow. We *all* need knowledge and skills above and beyond what our parents and grandparents had.

In the modern workplace, communication and computation are more important than ever before. Admiral James Watkins uses a naval analogy to illustrate this point: At the end of World War II, a cruiser had 1,700 men on it. The average education level required to run the ship was perhaps eighth grade. Today a cruiser has a crew of 700, and the average education level required is about *two years beyond high school.*

Literacy, however, is not only vital in the workplace. Research shows that learning can translate into significant gains, for both parents and children. A recent study by Sandra Van Fossen and Thomas Sticht showed that children of unemployed mothers benefited from their mothers' participation in education programs—45 percent did better on tests, 46 percent earned better grades, 46 percent began to read more, and 52 percent reported that they liked school more.

Literacy also enhances the life of the individual, the community, and the nation. Understanding science, history, geography, civics, the arts, and other subjects helps us be better citizens by enabling us to see through demagoguery and to analyze an ever-increasing array of issues—health care, education, the environment, the federal budget deficit, and foreign affairs. Knowledge not only helps us support sound civic decisions in our community, state and nation; it also enriches our lives, and the lives of those around us. As Thomas Jefferson wrote, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

The pace of change in recent years has been breathtaking. Enormous strides in commercial and industrial technology have changed forever the way we live and work. At the same time, our generation has witnessed astonishing political and economic changes in Europe, Asia, South America, and other regions. Together, these events seem to be making our world both safer and freer; but they are also making it smaller, and thus more competitive.

The National Alliance of Business reports that, of high school graduates who do not go on to college, only 27 percent read well enough, and 19 percent write well enough to hold jobs. In the long run, creating a competitive workforce means having the best schools in the world in every community, schools that hold our children to the highest possible standards of learning, and prepare them for the highly skilled workforce of the 21st century.

But while we build better schools for tomorrow's workers, we must bear in mind that *85 percent of America's workers in the year 2000 is already in the workforce today.* Many in this group are already insufficiently skilled for jobs that are changing faster than they can keep up. Whether working on the line in a manufacturing plant, or drafting electrical drawings to build a new one, all of us need to go back to school—become lifelong learners.

Building A Community-Wide Strategy

Whether reaching out to a large number of new immigrants, or contending with abrupt changes in an important local industry, a community may want to consider the following seven principles as it develops a strategy to reach the fifth National Education Goal.

1. Changing Attitudes

The *attitude* many of us have about the idea of becoming students now that we're "grown-ups" is probably the greatest obstacle a community faces in trying to meet Goal 5.

In its 1992 annual report, the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP) concludes that the single greatest barrier to realizing the six Goals, is *"complacency about our educational shortcomings—as students, as parents, and as workers."* We're also complacent compared to our international competitors. NEGP reports that American workers are much less likely than their German and Japanese counterparts to report that they strongly agreed that workers should be expected to *think up better ways* to do their jobs. In addition, U.S. workers were far more likely than Belgian, German,

or Japanese workers to predict that their present job skills will be "very useful" in five years. Yet today, the average person can expect to change careers every 10 years—and change jobs even more frequently. To make these changes, we all need to expand our knowledge and skills, and continue doing so throughout our lives.

That's why the mission of the Public Library in Salinas, California, is to make learning a way of life for everyone in the community. Adult learning begins with program staff and reaches out into the community, recruiting local businesses, churches, restaurants, former students, local government officials, and others to participate in a variety of programs at 30 different local sites. In addition to regular adult education classes, the library offers programs to help adults deal with everything from stress and alcoholism to survival in the workplace.

2. Getting To Know Your Community

Identifying the various challenges that face a community is an important first step in building a successful strategy to reach Goal 5. These challenges are often related to the local economy. In some places, it may be built around a handful of large employers. In others, several related industries may predominate, with many small- or medium-sized employers accounting for most jobs. Still others may have attracted substantial immigrant populations, or may be faced with a growing number of homeless adults.

Many communities have created their own task force to address the issues of literacy and lifelong learning. Members often include those close to the knowledge and skills of adults in the community—local chambers of commerce, trade unions, social agencies, community colleges, churches, rotary clubs, and others.

San Antonio, Texas, has formed a collaboration of four partner institutions—the Chamber of Commerce, the San Antonio city government, the Bexar County government and the University of Texas. Each partner has contributed to the SAN ANTONIO 2000 executive committee, and each is actively recruiting parent organizations, neighborhood and community associations, teacher groups and others to join their crusade for literacy.

In Fall River, Massachusetts, the Private Industry Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the Fall River Task Force have formed a coalition to help move Fall River toward the six National Education Goals. To fight illiteracy, the community has formed subcommittees representing teachers, parents, students, social and health services, school management, and adult literacy experts.

Winona, a small rural community in north central Mississippi, has adopted the National Education Goals and has established a broad-based steering committee that includes some 60 members (a significant number in a town of only 6,500). Winona is working toward the Goals with an emphasis on job skills and economic growth.

Who needs adult education?

We all do. For most of us, learning doesn't "end" when we leave high school or college, or graduate from an education program. Those events are but milestones in a lifelong journey of increasing knowledge and experience.

Many adults who master rudimentary reading skills such as menus, grocery lists and bus schedules don't stop there. They want to read to their children, read newspapers, books, and more. Workers proficient with today's new technology soon face newer technology. A physician's education *begins* with medical school, and continues throughout his or her career. Education can both exhilarate and empower us, and make us hungry for more. As workers, as parents, or as citizens, we find that learning isn't restricted to classrooms and college campuses, but a challenge and a responsibility we carry with us throughout our lives.

While changing attitudes to reflect this, and working to involve the entire community are crucial to reaching Goal 5, a community will probably want to *start* by identifying the local groups whose need is *most urgent*—those who stand to gain the most from upgrading their knowledge and skills. These groups might include:

- Adults who need to improve their knowledge and skills because of changes at work or at home;
- Workers who want to advance on the job;
- Young adults who have dropped out of high school;
- Others who may have a diploma and need to improve their basic skills to succeed in a career and/or as parents;
- Immigrants who do not speak, read, or write English well;
- Participants in the federal JOBS program (Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training Program). Those are welfare recipients, usually single female heads of households, who are required to take literacy and/or job training to qualify for welfare benefits;
- Learning-disabled youths and adults who did not succeed in school;

- Inmates in correctional institutions and other institutionalized adults;
- Homeless adults.

After identifying those in particular need of training in literacy, the next step might be to define *what* such adults need to know and be able to do to be good workers, parents, and citizens. Doing an inventory of the efforts already underway can help communities identify what additional opportunities for adult learning are needed in their community.

3. Reaching Out

Once a community has conducted an inventory of available programs and determined what more is needed, the next step is reaching out to adults and encouraging them to take advantage of the opportunities available. Probably the most effective form of recruitment in adult education is *word of mouth.* Recommendations from friends, family and peers in the community and in the workplace still account for the largest number of new students enrolled in adult education programs.

In Madison, Wisconsin's Omega School, nearly all 400 of its students came to the literacy program through referrals from other Omega students or from local human services employees.

Many communities are supplementing word of mouth with advertising. In Philadelphia, transit and sanitation vehicles display posters advertising adult learning classes, and at Veterans Stadium, billboards and scoreboards flash similar messages at the fans.

Public service announcements on local radio and television stations in Bibb County, Georgia, inform residents about Project READ—a volunteer literacy program.

4. Creating Skill Clinics

Adult learners all have their own reasons for pursuing further education. They may want to improve the way they communicate with others; set better examples for their children; get jobs; gain promotions, or earn more money; keep their current job; read the Bible; get a high school diploma, or earn a driver's license; be smarter shoppers; or know more about how government works.

Once adults become aware of available programs, it helps to have someplace where they can go to determine the particular program that would best help them reach their personal goals. In order to meet this need, more and more communities are creating one-stop assessment and referral centers—skill clinics—where adults can get such questions answered. Skill clinics assess how adults' present skills compare with those they would like to have—or that they need for a particular job. After making the necessary assessment, the center refers them to appropriate programs or resources. Skill clinics are often located in community colleges or on large work sites.

McDonnell Douglas has joined with Coastline Community College in Huntington Beach, California, to develop a Pre-employment Assessment program for candidates for employment in the firm's clerical, structures assembly, and manufacturing positions. Following skills assessment, applicants are either referred to McDonnell Douglas for a job interview, or to Coastline for further basic skills training.

At Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN), a community-based literacy program in Washington, D.C., a series of interviews helps prospective students identify goals and then select education programs that can help them achieve their goals.

The Valley Regional Adult Education Program in Shelton, Connecticut, uses the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) to evaluate students to determine placement, monitor students' progress, and determine whether they are meeting their goals. This unique system, which includes more than 80 standardized assessment instruments, also tailors assessment to measure specific skills.

5. Making It Easy

Adult education students have the same responsibilities as other adults—caring for their children, earning a living, and so on. Unfortunately, many adult education programs don't fit the way adults live and work today. Programs aren't offered in convenient locations, childcare isn't available, or the courses aren't held at sensible times. As a result, many adults who want or need educational services never enroll. Or, if they do, they often attend irregularly, fall behind and drop out. The following examples show how some communities are working to make education easier for "grown-up" students.

Flexibility

The Quincy School Community Council's Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) program has an innovative approach called TAG (Take and Give). TAG addresses

the overwhelming demand for ESL services among the growing number of Chinese immigrants and refugees in the Boston area by training recent program graduates to tutor new students who know little or no English. To maximize efficiency and flexibility, TAG combines this one-on-one tutoring method with a home-study program of bilingual video lessons and written materials.

The Doña Ana Branch Community College in Las Cruces, New Mexico, offers English as a Second Language, GED, citizenship preparation, basic skills classes, and career advisement, at 29 locations across the southern part of Sierra County. Free tutorial services—available at the convenience of students, 12 hours a day—supplement these classroom programs.

The Washington, D.C. Literacy Council matches students with tutors and allows them to set their schedules, choosing the times and days of the week most convenient for both teacher and student. This permits learning to occur at the student's pace and allows additional time for focusing on problem areas or making up missed lessons.

Support Services

In Dutchess County, New York's Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) provides a community-based, comprehensive, one-stop center for adult educational opportunities. The Adult Center for Comprehensive Education and Support Services is making it easier for busy, and/or unemployed adults to participate in their programs by providing transportation to and from their homes and to job interviews, as well as on-site childcare for newborns, toddlers, and pre-schoolers.

In the Dorchester area of Boston, Mujeres Unidas en Accion (Women United In Action) offers English as a Second Language, a GED program in Spanish, and basic literacy classes for young women and mothers, five days a week. The program provides on-site child care, education counselling, and referral services for women who need assistance with housing and health care. On average, women stay in the program for three years, and the program boasts an 82 percent retention rate.

Technology

Another novel approach to adult learning is computer-based instruction. Computers provide self-paced instruction, privacy, and the opportunity for as much drill and practice as a student needs, all in a format that adult literacy students find interesting and useful. Moreover, students can use the computers as little or as long as they wish, at their own convenience. An added benefit is that many students using this format develop computer literacy—a highly marketable skill in today's work world.

Words for Life, located in a poor neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland, is meeting the education and work-related needs of poor residents using computers, small group instruction, and individual tutoring. Students enjoy the freedom, privacy, immediate feedback, and sense of accomplishment in using a computer; and the computer system also allows instructors to identify specific areas of difficulty for individual learners.

As part of its commitment to achieve a 100 percent quality record for on-time delivery, Federal Express will soon unveil a new interactive videodisc system detailing what every employee can do to help achieve that goal. The system will use state-of-the art multimedia software to train 75,000 of its 90,000 employees—at only 20 percent of the cost of classroom training.

Distance learning is also providing dramatic evidence of the potential for cost-effective use of technology in literacy instruction. The Georgia Satellite Literacy Program is reaching unprecedented numbers of adults by broadcasting lessons via satellite to over 60 communities across the state. More than 400 students are able to communicate with lead instructors via telephone during the broadcasted lessons.

6. Motivating Adult Learners

Although workplace literacy programs have specific learning goals to meet for employers, a good curriculum will also reflect the *students'* goals. The most effective workplace literacy programs, says Brian Elrod, an executive responsible for the design of basic skills programs at the UAW-Ford National Education, Development, and Training Center in Dearborne, Michigan, reflect the learners' needs and interest which, in turn, mirror corporate needs. This point of view is shared by successful adult education providers around the country.

Putting learners' needs first means involving the entire family, at the Work in America Institute, in Scarsdale, New York. Its employee education program goes beyond basic skills courses to provide parenting instruction—how to make science fun for children, learn math with games, and read aloud to children.

Businesses have found that putting workers first pays off. After estimating that only 8 percent of its laborers had the skills they would need to compete in the 21st century, carpet manufacturer Collins & Aikman committed itself to teaching its employees not only how to run its new computers, but also how to improve their reading, writing and arithmetic skills. By combining job skills with "people skills," they have been able to increase productivity, boost morale—and lower absenteeism by 43 percent.

Adult students are not blank slates. They bring background knowledge and life experiences to the classroom. From the first day of class, adult students focus their attention on *what* they're reading rather than solely on the technical skills of reading itself. Getting at that information often motivates them to overcome reading difficulties. Even in basic literacy programs, the words students learn can be placed as early as possible in a context relevant to them.

The workplace presents a unique opportunity to design programs in which the curriculum can be directly related to the practical application of literacy skills. To train cafeteria workers in the District of Columbia, Skills Enhancement Training draws on actual materials used in cafeterias such as recipes, safety handbooks, and inventory sheets.

Almost any kind of adult education program can build on students' knowledge and interests. A literacy program in the South Bronx, New York, is training educators from around the country to build on the background knowledge of adult learners. "Bronx Ed" offers students an opportunity to read their own life histories by first recording them on cassette, transcribing them, then using them as a text for reading, vocabulary, and spelling lessons.

7. Measuring Results

When most communities turn their attention to finding out how well they are doing in relation to reaching Goal 5, they will find themselves frustrated with inconsistent and inadequate record-keeping on adult education.

Most community and workplace programs measure success only through participation—how many adults occupied seats in any given class. Assessment of what adults actually learn—what they learn and can do at the end of a course—is all too rare. Yet it doesn't have to be this way. Adult education students are usually as eager as their teachers to find out how they are doing. Effective programs provide progress reports and share test results with students.

Since 1985, the New York City Literacy Assistance Center has been leading the way in collecting and disseminating information on program accountability. The Center maintains a comprehensive database—including students' learning gains, employment status, and public assistance status—on every publicly funded literacy program in New York State.

The Sunnyside UP family literacy program in Tucson, Arizona, uses multiple and nontraditional methods of assessing student progress. Students in the

program—mostly Hispanic mothers—keep daily journals reflecting on both their personal and learning experiences, and get written feedback from their teachers. This daily "pen-pal" relationship allows instructors to gauge students' progress throughout the year.

CONCLUSION

Many more people are enrolled in adult education programs today than a decade ago (From 2.1 million in 1980, to 3.6 million in 1991). Even so, the American Society for Training and Development estimates that only 1 out of 14 American workers receives any formal training from an employer. Employees who do receive training tend to be disproportionally white-collar and college educated. Business continues to invest in training its mid- and upper-management, with too little attention on lower-level workers whose jobs are most immediately tnreatened by technological changes. And among adults who do seek literacy training, too many achieve only basic skill levels and do not go on to master more advanced levels of literacy required for better-paying jobs in the future.

Yet we have made great strides in recent years, many of them in response to changes that could not easily have been predicted. By almost every measure we've turned the corner and are now moving forward in the right direction—thousands of communities are working out their own strategies for reaching and teaching adult learners. They're accepting the AMERICA 2000 challenge to "go back to school" and make ours a "nation of students."

We know that education is not just about making a living, it's about making a life. This is as true for individuals as for our nation as a whole. And we haven't a person nor a moment to waste.

▲ ▲ ▲

The following pages include examples of promising and successful adult education programs for adult basic literacy, workplace literacy, English as a Second Language, and more. Some of those programs are sponsored in whole or in part by various levels of government; some are paid for by business; others are mostly the work of volunteers. Together they provide a cross-section of adult education initiatives at work across the country that illustrate the strategies communities are using to reach Goal 5.

What Other Communities Are Doing

Motorola University, Schaumburg, Illinois

Motorola University, based in Motorola's corporate headquarters in suburban Chicago, is a leading example of one corporation's commitment to promoting workplace literacy. Motorola recognizes that America needs a workforce responsive to the demands of the marketplace—skilled in reading, writing and computation, able to think critically and to solve problems. That is why the company is teaching its employees skills they need to be active, productive members of the workforce—now and in the future.

Motorola first came to grips with the extent of its employees' educational deficiencies after testing plant workers in the early 1980s, and discovering that two-thirds were incapable of performing rudimentary math problems. Few new employees could meet seventh-grade standards in reading or math.

Motorola made a strategic decision to invest in comprehensive, on-going training and education for all of its employees—at the cost of $120 million a year. "We realized that remedial elementary education was not something we could do well ourselves, so we turned for help to community colleges and other local institutions," says William Wiggenhorn, president of Motorola University.

The training effort, which began as a stopgap measure a decade ago, has become an integral part of Motorola's current operations. "We now know there is no real distinction between corporate education and every other kind of education. Education is a strenuous, universal, unending human activity that neither business nor society can live without," says Mr. Wiggenhorn.

Motorola University has no campus. Employees attend local schools, colleges and universities joined in partnership with Motorola. The company has helped shape curriculum to meet its own workplace requirements. Classes offered range from 7th grade math to graduate-level business instruction.

All 105,000 Motorola employees world-wide are required to attend 40 hours—five working days—of classes every year. By the year 2000, they will attend 20 days of classes annually. Although mandating classroom hours may have resulted in less time spent on the job, Jim Frasier, Manager of Educational Research at Motorola, reports that the company is still saving money by retraining its workers, instead of hiring new ones.

Commenting on Motorola's success, Bernard R. Gifford, Vice President for Education of Apple Computer, Inc., calls Motorola University a "part of the Learning Society: a model of society in which learning is freed from the confines of the schoolroom or the school day. It is a model in which people of all ages seize opportunities to learn about any topic, in any sequence, whenever and whatever they can."

Contact:
Diane Weaver, Registration Supervisor
Motorola University
Galvin Center for Continuing Education
Schaumburg, Illinois 60196
(708) 576-6832

Cooperative Education Services, Poughkeepsie, New York

"Think of us as your friendly education provider," says Shirley Toth, Staff Specialist/Coordinator at the BOCES ACCESS center in Poughkeepsie, New York. Every county in New York State has a BOCES: a Board of Cooperative Education Services. BOCES are county-wide educational centers for special education students whose local schools may not be suited to their unique challenges. BOCES ACCESS is also a user-friendly, one-stop shopping center for adult students in need of counseling, instruction, and referral services.

"We get them here and we do everything," says Toth of the many services ACCESS provides. The center offers occupational education services, basic literacy skills classes, case management training and counseling, as well as child care so parents can focus on their studies without worrying about time spent away from their children.

ACCESS helps its clientele in many ways. "We drive them here, we take them home, and we take care of their children," reports Toth. The center also has a program for handicapped adults, who account for about 13 percent of ACCESS students.

ACCESS offers advice and training to those preparing to enter the workforce, as well as to those who need to update their job skills to keep pace with changes in their workplace. After evaluating their client's current skills, staff members at ACCESS enroll them in classes to help them meet their educational objectives.

Although most students attend ACCESS for six hours a day, shorter, specialized occupational training classes are offered in the evening. Recent courses include:

medical secretary studies, computerized accounting, cabinet making, and proof-reading.

Once students have completed their coursework, ACCESS also helps place them in the workforce. ACCESS networks with local businesses and industries who participate in an annual job fair. The center also provides job and college counseling.

State, local, and private sources provide the annual operating budget of about $1 million. For each of its 200 students, ACCESS spends $5,000 per year.

Contact:
Gary R. Brady, Supervisor
Adult and Continuing Education
BOCES ACCESS
578 Salt Point Turnpike
Poughkeepsie, New York 12601
(914) 471-9203

Fayetteville Technical Community College, North Carolina

Of the 58 community colleges in North Carolina, Fayetteville Community College ranks first in recruitment and retention of new students. Its success is due in part to the college's Centralized Assessment & Retention Center. "We've got something different here," says director Sue Thorne-Crytzer. The center serves students seeking to develop adult literacy and/or basic education skills.

Staff members at the center help new students assess their weaknesses, define educational goals, and design programs of study to achieve those goals. Although courses are not taught at the Center itself, the Assessment & Retention Center provides support and guidance for new students, and continues to offer counseling and evaluation throughout a student's educational career. Most students take their classes through Fayetteville's Literacy and Basic Skills program.

The primary aim of the center is to serve students from all over Fayetteville County. If resources at the Center or at Fayetteville are inadequate, or if Fayetteville is too far from a student's home or work, the counselors at the Center will help place that student at a closer facility.

The Center tracks its own progress by maintaining computerized records of all of its students. Student profiles are often provided to instructors, to assist them in

tailoring lessons to help students. Student records are also used to track student retention and satisfaction. The ultimate objective is finding the most effective way for students to reach their own learning goals.

Annual costs are approximately $79,000 for full-time staff; about $10,000 for equipment including computers, audiovisual and testing materials; and $52,000 for two full-time resource specialists.

Contact:
Sue Thorne-Crytzer
Fayetteville Technical Community College
P.O. Box 35236
Literacy and Basic Skills
Fayetteville, North Carolina 28303
(919) 678-8351

Technology for Literacy Center, St. Paul, Minnesota

Located in a St. Paul shopping mall, the Technology for Literacy Center (TLC) provides instruction and assistance to adults who want to improve basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The Center's convenient location makes it easily accessible to students and its effectiveness has kept people coming back—and bringing their friends.

Before the TLC opened, its staff developed a marketing plan to attract students to the Center. From the start, interest and participation has been so high that they have barely used it, according to Dr. Terilyn Turner, who helped start the TLC.

Once their proficiency in reading has been established, TLC clients team up with advisors, who provide individualized counseling to define goals and create personal plans of instruction.

Students spend a great deal of time working one-on-one with instructors, who are certified in Adult Basic Education. Trained volunteer tutors help students make use of technology, such as interactive videos and personal computers, to improve their basic skills.

Many of the center's disabled students are aided by such technological equipment as talking boards and special keyboards. Ms. Lou Walker, Instructional Supervisor at TLC, describes one handicapped student who told center staffers, "I am so glad this program is here—I've learned more here in one year than I did in all my years of

school." Students at the center appreciate its resources, as well as the personal attention they receive, says Walker.

The center serves adults preparing for the General Educational Development (GED) degree, or for an Adult Diploma, as well as those interested in strengthening or upgrading work skills. TLC is a place for lifelong learners. Its first student was an 80-year-old woman determined to get her GED. Another 80-year-old student earned her GED through the center, and then went on to study at a local college.

TLC students are expected to take their studies seriously. Entering students sign a contract stating that they will devote a minimum of four hours of work per week to their studies. The staff tries to relate what students learn at the center to their home lives; for example, adults are encouraged to read with their children (or grandchildren) to develop their literacy skills.

The Center currently serves about 2,000 adults per year. TLC staff members are part of a network that provides in-service training to other adult basic educators in the St. Paul area.

The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Adult Basic Education Program. The Center spends about $250 for each of its 2,000 students, with an annual operating budget of $550,000.

Contact:
Ms. Lou Walker, Instructional Supervisor
Technology for Literacy Center
580 University Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
(612) 290-8332

West Humboldt Employment Training Center, Chicago, Illinois

A collaboration between elementary schools, high schools, and community-based organizations in the West Humboldt neighborhood of Chicago, the West Humboldt Employment Training Center teaches parents literacy skills and helps prepare young children for school. The Center provides comprehensive support services including on-site health and child care, and soon they will offer Head Start classes for children 3-5 years of age.

The goal of the Center is to strengthen parents' literacy skills to promote better parenting and an improved quality of life. "We are trying to bombard the family

with everything," says Project Director Jody Raphael. The program accepts anyone who shows commitment; no other screening is used. Currently, it serves about 150 participants each year. There is always a waiting list.

West Humboldt is a poor African-American and Hispanic neighborhood where many residents lack necessary educational tools. The Center emphasizes recruitment of minority fathers whose children have not benefitted from other programs or resources. The childcare center allows parents with very small children to participate. Such participants are often recruited through local elementary schools.

The project collaborates with City Colleges of Chicago, which provides teachers; has strong ties with area businesses for job training and placement opportunities; and receives referrals and funding support from local welfare agencies.

"Problems arise because people simply can't read," says Raphael. "Our program is unique because we integrate comprehensive case management services with on-site health care, and childcare....We are trying to combat and prevent the problems that keep people from getting ahead."

The Center draws on twelve sources—federal, state, local and private—to meet its annual operating budget of $600,000. The Center spends $1,900 per participant to provide services free of charge.

Contact:
Ms. Jody Raphael, Project Director
West Humboldt Employment Training Center
1633 North Hamlin Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60647
(312) 772-0900

Ventura Unified School District, Ventura, California

This program was developed five years ago when the community realized that its system of vocational training was serving neither its students nor its businesses. The Ventura Unified School District developed a new program providing individualized, competency-based, vocational training in high-technology industries for adults with disabilities. Their success in helping handicapped young adults into the workforce led to an expansion of the program, which now includes adult and secondary vocational training.

Using students' goals as a starting point, a committee of teachers interviews and assesses their skills and weaknesses, and designs a specialized program to help students become competitive in the job market.

Students learn advanced technical vocational skills using the latest in computer technology. The program emphasizes life skills and critical thinking. They work on the "total student," including personal hygiene, language, and social skills. They have even developed a program for non-English speakers. Students work at their own pace; success is not measured by "seat time."

"The idea is flexibility," says Barry Tronstad, Principal of Adult Education for the Ventura Unified School District. The program is driven by the goals of the students. When a student is challenged in a certain area, staff members try to find someone with the expertise to help that student. "Listen to what people want, not what you can provide," says Tronstad. "Our success rate is nearly 100%. Everyone who has wanted a job has gotten one."

The program offers 140 different classes. Areas of study include medical technology, computer-aided drafting, electronic office occupations, computer graphics, animation, and electronic repair. Because of the individuality of each student's program, vocational training can be tailored to suit particular industries or corporations.

For example, a contract with the school district enables computer students to gain hands-on experience providing technical assistance and computer repair. The program has been successful in contracting its services to other private industries because it provides high quality training at a competitive price. These charges offset the cost of the total program. The program is supported by payments from businesses, student fees, insurance carriers, and some funding from the state and federal government.

The program serves about 300 students with an annual operating budget of $1,000,000.

Contact:
Barry A. Tronstad, Principal of Adult Education
Ventura Unified School District
3777 Dean Drive
Ventura, California 93003
(805) 650-8570

Pima County Adult Education, Tucson, Arizona

"One of the things we're going to have to do to implement successful K-12 reform is to more fully involve parents, and that includes offering more educational opportunities," says Greg Hart, Director of Pima County Adult Education (PCAE). PCAE "really represents community collaboration...a partnership for community awareness."

Pima County Adult Education has been providing adult education services to the Tucson/Pima County community since 1969. The largest program of its kind in Arizona, it currently serves 9,000 adults annually with literacy, GED, English as a second language (ESL), and citizenship classes. PCAE views teacher/student partnerships as the critical element in moving adult learners toward achievement of their goals.

Diversity in population and geography mark the region served by the Pima County Adult Education program. Program sites are found in elementary and high schools, work places, correctional facilities, community organizations, and the Tahono O'Odham and Yaqui Indian reservations. The program covers a geographic area larger than Rhode Island and Connecticut combined, encompassing highly urban and distinctly rural areas.

Among the most outstanding features of PCAE is the variety of programs it offers to serve special populations. Such programs include: the Adult Vocational Training Project; job search/placement assistance; the JOBS project for welfare recipients, including a strong life skills and counseling component; Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS); Sunnyside UP Family Education Project, a full-day project for parents and their pre-school aged children; and the Workplace Education Project, which supports worksite instruction in basic skills, including ESL.

Hart stresses the importance of collaboration in PCAE: "It is about partnership, community-wide collaboration, coming together to form out of the whole something greater than what we can do individually." PCAE has former students who now teach and volunteer to help new students.

Recently, PCAE was one of five programs in the nation to receive a $250,000 Toyota Families for Learning grant from the National Center for Family Literacy, in Louisville, Kentucky, for its Sunnyside UP family literacy program.

Out of an overall annual operating budget of $3.3 million, PCAE allots $1.4 million for literacy, GED, English as a second language, and citizenship classes. PCAE spends $163 annually per student to provide services free of charge.

Contact:
Greg Hart, Director
Pima County Adult Education
130 West Congress, Room 540
Tucson, Arizona 85701
(602) 740-8695

Coors "Literacy. Pass It On." Golden, Colorado

Coors Brewing Company launched Coors "Literacy. Pass It On" in 1990, and committed $40 million over five years to reach 500,000 adults with literacy services. The program is one of the most comprehensive, long-term commitments by an American corporation addressing the national problem of illiteracy. Program elements include substantial support of leading national literacy organizations, an information hotline, increasing awareness, recruiting non-readers, and generating funds at local levels.

Coors has long prided itself on its commitment to corporate responsibility. But Celia Sheneman, director of the Coors national literacy program, says, "We were taking a shotgun approach to making contributions and providing resources. We wanted to focus on one cause where we could really make a difference."

As part of "Literacy. Pass It On," Coors has donated a total of $3.2 million dollars to Laubach Literacy Action, Literacy Volunteers of America, Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, and SER-Jobs for Progress. With Coors's help these groups have reached more non-readers than ever before.

A toll-free hotline offers information on 18,000 literacy programs and approximately 60,000 human services programs throughout the United States and its territories. Hotline operators direct callers to programs in their local areas. In two and a half years, the hotline has received more than 53,000 calls.

Across the country, a network of nearly 700 Coors distributors raise funds for grassroots literacy programs. The brewing company has also launched an extensive public awareness campaign that entails newspaper, magazine, radio and billboard advertising, as well as direct marketing.

Like many businesses, Coors found evidence of the national illiteracy problem within its own ranks. As jobs at all levels have become increasingly complex and technology-oriented, many employees found their illiteracy a stumbling block to success in the workplace. Recognizing that a business is only as strong as its employees, Coors opened a learning center in Golden, Colorado, for its current and retired employees. A reading specialist from a local community college trains 25 employees and volunteers to tutor reading, one-on-one. Personalized instruction incorporates phonics, computer-aided learning, writing exercises, and other strategies.

Already 260,000 new adult readers have received literacy services as a result of Coors "Literacy. Pass It On." Coors is committed to achieving its goal of reaching 500,000 adults by 1995.

Contact:
Celia Sheneman, Director
Coors "Literacy. Pass It On."
311 Tenth Street, NH 420
Golden, Colorado 80401
1 (800) 525-0308

NOVA-STAR Center, Silicon Valley, California

People across the country are discovering that skills that were sufficient in the latter half of the 20th century will not carry them into the next. Companies are streamlining their organizations by replacing manpower with technology. The technology itself is ever-changing, and keeping abreast of such change requires the continual renewal of skills.

In Silicon Valley, California, there is a company responding to the state's growing number of dislocated workers. North Valley Skill Testing, Assessment, and Reemployment Center (NOVA-STAR) assists those who have poor English skills, or who require technical training, or help in shifting from one profession to another. The center's primary purpose is not placement but referral to training; however, NOVA-STAR uses California Employment Service's computerized job bank to match participants with potential jobs or to identify skills necessary for certain jobs.

Funded mainly through the U.S. Department of Labor's Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the center also receives funding from the Federal Defense Conversion Act and through various state agencies. Working in cooperation with the local Private

Industry Council, the California Employment Service, community colleges, and employers, NOVA-STAR serves approximately 3,000 people per year.

When the North Valley Center opened in 1983, the Silicon Valley was establishing itself as the nation's defense technology capital; and the majority of the center's clientele were cannery workers, dislocated by the shift of the region's industrial base. Six years later, national cuts in defense spending prompted another shift in the electronics and manufacturing industries, once again dislocating thousands of employees. In response, the North Valley Center consolidated its reemployment services with the creation of NOVA-STAR.

Program Director Michael Curran points to Food Machinery Corporation (FMC) to exemplify the dramatic industrial changes in the Silicon Valley and the demand for services offered by NOVA-STAR: "Over the last few decades, FMC has gone from producing plows to swords and back to plows again. In the mid-1980s, when defense spending was at its peak, the company had around 4,000 people on its payroll. In 1993, it expects to employ approximately 1,500. The defense engineers dislocated now are as unemployable as the cannery workers we served years ago." NOVA-STAR is working with the whole workforce—from the shop floor to the managerial level—in a two-year effort to help FMC's employees strengthen and upgrade their work skills.

Participants in the NOVA-STAR Center first undergo a series of skill assessments that measure interest, aptitude, and ability. After identifying skills necessary for certain jobs based on the testing, the counselor assigned to the participant makes recommendations and refers the participant to job opportunities or for training activities. Individuals re-entering the job market may up-grade skills through the center's computerized system of instruction; however, NOVA-STAR participants are most commonly referred to adult-education programs at public or private secondary schools, community colleges, or work-site training programs. As part of its training component, NOVA-STAR offers job-related workshops focusing on résumé writing, solicitation of jobs, and interviewing.

Of the 3,000 people served by the center each year, 80 percent need only minimal services to become reemployed; the remainder require more intensive retraining or language development. Seventy percent of NOVA-STAR participants find work in the field in which they were trained within three months of completing the program.

Federal, state, and local sources (including employers), fund the annual operating budget of nearly $4 million. Each assessment costs roughly $175. The much broader task of retraining requires between $4,000 to $8,000 per student.

Contact:
Michael Curran, Director of Employment Development
North Valley Skill Testing, Assessment, and Reemployment Center
505 West Olive Street, Suite 550
Sunnyvale, California 94086
(408) 730-7232

Wisconsin Workplace Partnership Training Program, Madison, Wisconsin

Forces traditionally at odds have united in Wisconsin in a partnership dedicated to promoting workplace literacy and basic skills training. For the past four years, the Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, the State AFL-CIO, and Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce have been the joint recipients of a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which, in conjunction with state funds, allows them to serve 24 union and non-union sites statewide. Partners at the state level work with their local counterparts to develop, implement, and evaluate curricula and support services to improve the quality of Wisconsin's workforce.

The Wisconsin Workplace Partnership Training Program serves a wide variety of worksites, ranging from hotels to manufacturing plants. Spokesperson Mary Ann Jackson notes that in all fields and at all levels, technological changes and the "quality improvement movement" make workplace literacy and basic skills training absolute necessities. "People now are required to work in teams, to measure their own success, and to recruit their own team members. They need to have the math and communications skills to do the things formerly done by supervisors."

"Peer advisors" play an important role in identifying and solving problems at the worksite. Working with local coordinators, volunteers from the shop floor provide leadership in meeting the needs of their co-workers. Emphasizing the connection between education and job performance, worksite curricula are based on job-related tasks; for example, says Jackson, "a technical manual may be used to teach math and reading."

Using project funds, the Wisconsin partners developed an original six-step guide to job-task analysis showing how to create work-based curricula for almost any type of business or industry. In addition, the partnership is developing assessments to accurately measure the strengths and weaknesses of program participants. Such assessments would be based largely on employee performance.

Support services, such as educational counseling and child care, are also available through the partnership. Having made the worksite programs both relevant and accessible, the Wisconsin partners point to several indicators of their success. Waiting lists of businesses interested in developing on-site learning centers are growing rapidly. Last year, approximately half of the program's participants stated they achieved their personal goals, and over 400 tested higher in communications skills. In addition, "there is the type of success that's immeasurable," says Jackson. "After classes workers have the confidence, as well as the skills, necessary for problem-solving." The Wisconsin partnership is committed "to finding out what works and making workplace literacy the norm."

The total project budget is $2.6 million, with federal funding of $1.16 million. The cost per student is about $350. Participating companies gradually increase their share of funding over 4 years, eventually taking over all funding themselves.

Contact:
Mary Ann Jackson
Wisconsin Board of Vocational
Technical and Adult Education
310 Price Place, Box 7874
Madison, Wisconsin 53707
(608) 267-9684

The Connection: Center for Shared Family Literacy
Lowell, Massachusetts

Within walking distance of low-income housing in Lowell stands The Connection, a literacy institute committed to the view that parents must serve as the first and most important teachers of their children. Family literacy means much more than demonstrating basic skills in reading, writing, and speaking. It incorporates a number of broader themes such as how to be a good parent.

According to Particia Kenney, director of The Connection, "Our name says it all. We are helping families use language as a tool to make and strengthen connections among family members as well as between the family and community."

The primary programming focus is on interaction between parent and child. To foster this relationship, The Connection sponsors parent-child development play sessions. Parents and children are grouped together with others of similar age and development. In this environment an early childhood specialist reads a story and suggests to the parents ways of promoting their children's language skills.

Eighty percent of participants are minorities, and many are recent immigrants. To meet the special needs of those parents still learning English, The Connection offers adult education classes to better equip the parents to teach their kids.

In its broad understanding of family literacy, The Connection also houses support groups for parents on a number of issues including preparation for the GED, job placement, computer literacy, and child discipline. Child care is always provided in the center during the adult activities.

The center recognizes the benefit of coordinating its efforts with those of local schools and community-based agencies. It also makes a special effort to reach out to those families that are unable to participate in center activities. For example, families can tune in to the Center's own cable TV program entitled, "The Book Connection." Every other week, the show features an author, teacher, or other guest who discusses activities that promote family literacy.

Dial-A-Story is another service that reaches far beyond the walls of the center. Children in the local area can call a designated number to hear a story read over the phone free of charge. The director explains, "If children can't come to our storytime, then we'll bring storytime to them by phone."

As an Even Start program, federal funds supply The Connection with its annual operating budget of approximately $240,000.

Contact:
Patricia Kenney
The Connection
77 E. Merrimack, Suite 1
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852
(508) 441-3767

Sources of Further Information

American Association of Adult and Continuing Educators (AAACE)
2101 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 925
Arlington, Virginia 22201
(703) 522-2234

The American Association of Adult and Continuing Educators functions primarily as an information clearinghouse; it evaluates adult and continuing education programs and sponsors conferences, seminars, and workshops.

American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
National Center for Higher Education
One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 728-0200

The American Association of Community Colleges, whose members are two-year community and junior colleges and affiliates, produces studies on lifelong education and the mass media and humanities in education; it also promotes partnerships among high schools, employers, and members.

American Council on Education
General Educational Development Training Service
One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Suite 20
Washington, D.C. 20036-1193
(202) 939-9490

The American Council on Education conducts research in government relations, women in higher education, education credits, leadership development, and international education. Members are colleges, universities, and education associations.

AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute
815 16th Street, N.W.
Room 405
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 638-3912

The Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI) is the employment and training arm of the AFL-CIO. HRDI researches and disseminates information about literacy, school-to-work transition, and dislocated worker programs.

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
1002 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 338-2006

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy is committed to supporting the development of family literacy programs, breaking the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy, and establishing literacy as a value in every American family. The foundation awards grants to help establish successful family literacy efforts and provides seed money for community planning and interagency family literacy programs. Among the many documents published and distributed by the foundation, are *First Teachers: A family literacy handbook for parents, policy-makers, and literacy providers* and *Barbara Bush's Family Reading Tips.*

Business Council for Effective Literacy
1221 Avenue of the Americas
35th Floor
New York, New York 10020
(212) 512-2415

The Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL) operates as a clearinghouse. BCEL compiles quarterly reports of activities in business, publishing, and education related to literacy programs and it publishes a newsletter. The company also produces other research compilations and monographs.

National Alliance of Business, Inc.
1201 New York Avenue, N.W.
Seventh Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005-3917
(202) 289-2888

The National Alliance of Business (NAB) works to increase private-sector training and job opportunities for low-income and unemployed groups by developing partnerships among business, government, labor, education, and community groups. NAB provides training and technical assistance and maintains a clearinghouse for information on job training, education, and welfare programs.

National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL)
University of Pennsylvania
Graduate School of Education
3700 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6216
(215) 898-2100

The National Center on Adult Literacy conducts research on issues such as the motivation of adults, retention in literacy programs, family literacy, workplace literacy, English as a second language, and skills and program assessment. Research results are disseminated through a newsletter, technical reports, commentaries, responses to requests, and a literacy technology laboratory. The center also works directly with adult educators to improve instruction.

National Center for Family Literacy
401 South Fourth Avenue
Suite 610
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-3449
(502) 584-1133

The National Center for Family Literacy supports family literacy by providing training and technical assistance to developers of new family literacy programs, providing information to policy makers, developing materials disseminated through a newsletter and a clearinghouse, funding model programs, and conducting research.

National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce
The University of Pennsylvania
4200 Pine Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-4090
(215) 898-4585

The National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce promotes linkages among businesses, workers, and educational suppliers by focusing on three major efforts: research, dissemination, and sustained dialogue. The center's projects range from an analysis of the extent and consequences of corporate investment in education to an investigation of the occupations and earnings of former vocational education students.

National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education for Limited English Proficient Adults and Out-of-School Youth (NCLE)
Center for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 429-9292

The National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education, an adjunct ERIC clearinghouse, locates, abstracts, and enters literacy education documents into the ERIC data base. In addition, NCLE provides technical assistance for the design of programs, curricula, and materials, and for program assessment. NCLE produces a directory of literacy programs.

National Institute for Literacy
800 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 632-1500

The National Institute for Literacy serves as a national resource center for literacy research and information, interagency policy development, technical assistance, and program evaluation. Through its Research Grant Awards Program, the Institute provides funding for research that will facilitate the achievement of National Education Goal #5.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Office of Research
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5573
(202) 299-2079

OERI supports research, evaluations, and analyses of federal, state, and local education policies and disseminates research information to national and state policy makers and the education community.

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)
U.S. Department of Labor
Room C-231B
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210
(202) 523-4840

The Department of Labor established the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills to determine skills for employment, an acceptable level of proficiency, and approaches to proficiency assessment. Researchers have interviewed employers and employees and analyzed job skills with expert panels providing guidance. A resulting report has been widely disseminated.

Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-7240
(202) 732-2270

This division administers federal adult education grant programs, provides advice on adult education issues, and coordinates policy for improving adult education programs.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Alamprese, J., N. Brigham, and J. Sivilli. [Forthcoming]. *Patterns of Promise: State and Local Strategies for Improving Coordination in Adult Education Programs.* Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: Cosmos Corporation. This report discusses what coordination means for adult education, identifies state and local initiatives supporting coordination, and identifies the benefits of and barriers to coordination.

Bliss, W. 1989. *Providing Adult Basic Education Services to Adults with Limited English Proficiency.* Report prepared for Project on Adult Literacy of the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis, Southport, CT. This paper discusses the significance of demographic trends that make us increasingly dependent on a growing-minority labor force. In addition, Bliss offers an overview of the population with limited English proficiency—the challenges they face, the services they currently receive, and the issues that must be addressed in the future.

Chisman, F.P., and Associates (ed.) 1990. *Leadership of Literacy: The Agenda for the 1990's.* San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass. This book provides a behind-the scenes look at our nation's response to the adult literacy crisis, from the perspective of authors who have been working to restructure the literacy field at the federal, state, and local levels. The book offers a road map for government, business, education, and community leaders who are seeking to bring about a more literate citizenry and workforce.

Darling, S. 1981. "Jefferson County Adult Reading Project." Final report submitted to the Kentucky State Department of Education 1981, ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 204 600. This report describes a model project intended to demonstrate a reading program for adults with severe reading problems. Great strides were demonstrated in creating awareness in the community of both program and the magnitude of the illiteracy problem in Jefferson County. The book includes description and analysis of the program as well as recommendations for establishing a similar program.

Kutner, M., Sherman, R., Webb, L. and Fisher, C. 1991. *A Descriptive Review of the National Workplace Literacy Program.* Washington, DC: Pelavin Associates. This examination of projects funded during the National Workplace Literacy Program's first year of operation identifies key components associated with promising workplace literacy projects and recommends ways to improve program effectiveness. It includes a review of the research literature, analyses of data from 29 of the 37 National Workplace Literacy projects, and assessments of site visits to six projects.

Lytle, S.L. and M, Wolfe. 1989. *Adult Literacy Education: Program Evaluation and Learner Assessment.* Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Careers, and Vocational Education. This monograph is intended primarily to make accessible to adult literacy educators the current literature in the field on program evaluation and learner assessment. In addition, this information may be of value to policymakers, funders, and researchers who are working to improve the quality of literacy education for adults.

Porter, D., and J. Morris ed., 1987. *Adult Basic Education: Child Care, Transportation, Support Services Workbook.* Austin: Texas Education Agency. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 290 007. This workbook focuses on two important needs of adult basic education students—child care and transportation and suggests ways that program administrators can develop appropriate, workable, community-based strategies to meet these needs.

Sarmiento, A.R., and A. Kay. 1990. *Worker-Centered Learning: A Union Guide to Workplace Literacy.* Washington, DC: AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute. This report supplies background information on workplace literacy, the changing workforce, and unions' involvement in education and training. It outlines specific suggestions for designing, implementing, and operating a successful workplace literacy program. It also recommends other services a union can offer if the employer is unable to provide a complete workplace literacy program.

Sticht, T. 1990. "Testing and Assessment in Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language Programs." San Diego: Applied Behavioral Cognitive Sciences, Inc. This report expands on the discussion of standardized tests given in federal law and the Department of Education rules and regulations that implement the law. It provides information that can be helpful to practitioners in the selection and use of standardized tests and may serve as a resource for staff development.

U.S. Departments of Education and Labor. *The Bottom Line: Basic Skills in the Workplace.* Washington, DC: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 291 922. Intended for employers considering establishing a basic skills program in their organization, or for those employers with programs that need modification, this report provides background information and examples of effective program designs to help improve the basic skills of the nation's workers.

U.S. Departments of Education and Labor. *Building a Quality Workforce.* 1988. Washington, DC: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 298 300. Recognizing that our nation's productivity, and therefore economic strength, depends on our ability to maintain a high-quality workforce, this report attempts to

identify the needs of the business community for qualified workers and to foster partnerships among the various sectors of our society to overcome the job-skills gap.

U.S. Department of Labor. 1992. *Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. Prepared by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), this report describes *how* communities can prepare their young people, as well as those workders already on the job, for productive work in the 21st century.